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## Japan

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### March 18 Update - Japan Food and Agriculture

**Report Categories:**

Agricultural Situation

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**Report Highlights:**

Immediately following the **Great East Japan Earthquake** on March 11, 2011, FAS/Japan prepared a series of reports on Japan's rapidly evolving food and agricultural situation. These reports were designed to disseminate vast amounts of information to a broad audience of policy makers and private sector actors as quickly as possible. Topics covered in these reports include; food safety, soil toxicity, port damages, disaster assistance, feed supply infrastructure, commodity prices, retail trends, consumer psychology, and many other food and agricultural topics. As the post-quake series of reports were prepared quickly, often from Japanese translations, some liberties may have been taken with grammar and writing style.

## **TODAY'S OVERVIEW**

Consumer hoarding behavior, rolling blackouts, and the lack of fuel continue to wreak havoc on Japan's food supply system. In response to nation-wide retail level food shortages the Japanese government has made strong overtures to the Japanese people to be judicious in their food purchases.

There are growing concerns about radiological contamination in the food supply, with consumers, retailers, and foreign governments starting to take precautionary measures. The GOJ's Ministry of Health Labor and Welfare has issued guidance to municipal and prefectural authorities regarding the handling of food contaminated by radioactivity. Major Japanese food export markets, such as China, South Korea, Thailand, and India have all announced that they are stepping up radiation testing for food and agricultural products originating in Japan. Government policy makers seem to be very much aware that concerns over radiological contamination in food will continue, even after the situation at the power plant is under control.

## **BACKGROUND**

A massive 9.0 magnitude earthquake and subsequent Tsunami hit Japan's north east pacific coastal region on March 11, 2011. The catastrophe devastated cities, towns, and villages of the prefectures located along the coast line. The most affected prefectures are Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima, and Ibaragi. In addition, more than 350 aftershocks have hit the affected area, including Tokyo.



## **PORTS**

Access of ships to Kashima port area is permitted, though subject to approval on an individual basis. The feed sector is reportedly searching for mini-ships with cranes and operating shore cranes to unload cargo. Repairs on damaged shore cranes have not been yet begun.

**Major Feed Grain Ports in Japan and the Quake/Tsunami Impact (no change from 3/17)**

Port	Damage	Compound Feed Production (in million metric tons)
Kushiro, Hokkaido	None	1.12
Tomakomai, Hokkaido	None	1.52
Hachinohe, Aomori	Severely damaged	1.82
Kamaishi, Iwate	Severely damaged, but reopened to emergency shipments	0.24
Ishinomaki, Miyagi	Severely damaged	1.14
Sendai, Miyagi	Severely damaged	0.46
Kashima, Ibaraki	Unloading facility partially damaged but compound feed production facility in tact	3.97
Nagoya, Aichi	None	1.34
Toyohashi, Aichi	None	0.72
Mizushima, Okayama	None	1.43
Yashiro, Kumamoto	None	0.71
Kagoshima, Kagoshima	None	1.39
Shibushi, Kagoshima	None	2.64
Other ports and inland production facilities	None	6.30

Total Compound Feed Production 24.80 million MT

### **EMERGENCY FOOD AID**

The March 17 evening addition of Yomiuri ran an inside-page report from Washington saying that, according to the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. military had supplied by Wednesday about 58.5 tons of bottled water and 1.9 tons of food via helicopters and other vehicles to the areas stricken by the powerful earthquake and tsunami last week. According to the paper, a helicopter unit aboard the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan conducted a total of 15 airlift missions, supplying goods such as food supplies, medical equipment, and clothes. The paper carried a photo of U.S. servicemen handing bottled water to people at a shelter in Rikuzentakada in Iwate Prefecture.

### **GRAINS AND OILSEEDS**

A week after the earthquake and the tsunami, the feed industry and livestock industry have begun to resume their operations in the affected areas.

Compound feed plants of feed manufacturers in the area, Hachinohe, Kamaishi, Ishinomaki and Sendai

(total production of 3.66 million tons per year, 15% of Japan's total production of compound feed) are still not operational. Some plants in Kashima have started working with only limited capacity.

The Japan offices of the American Soybean Association and the U.S. Grains Council can supply information on the status of individual feed millers.

## **SEAFOOD**

The blackouts, which are affecting cold storage facilities, continue to cause considerable price volatility in the seafood market. Domestically farmed shrimp prices have been falling and traders expect demand to further decrease as a result of the earthquake. Grade B1 Skipjack tuna prices have drastically increased (40% more than Feb.) to 270 yen per kg for 4.5 kg and above following the earthquake. The Skipjack fishing industry was impacted by the destruction from earthquake and tsunami and the rise is likely due to expectations that there will be a temporary suspension of fishing for Skipjack. Demand generally rises in April, which could result in a further increase in prices.

Sendai Central Wholesale Market, which provides fish supplies to northern Japan, resumed operations on March 16, following the arrival of fresh shipments. Buyer demand has been really strong.

## **WOOD PRODUCTS**

Hardwood and tropical plywood importer/wholesalers in Osaka have received many orders for plywood from house builders and others following the earthquake. They are unable to fill the orders with domestic supplies and are looking to import U.S. or Canadian OSB. This rapid increase in plywood demand is based on speculation of construction demand and supply shortages from plywood mills. The Japanese government may require building materials for housing up to 30,000 households temporarily. There are eight plywood mills in the disaster area, producing 35-40% of Japanese domestic production. Plywood mills that were not affected by the earthquake cannot resume full operation due to transportation limitations and electricity blackouts.

The daily lumber journal (Nikkan mokuzai) dated March 18, reported increasing orders of JAS OSB from Canadian OSB companies. One company reportedly received orders for a year's volume in just three days. There are also JAS certified mills in Germany, Poland and France that can meet these demands. Though, European mills do not have much extra supply capacity. Hardwood plywood from Malaysia and Indonesia can be used for both construction and concrete forms.

There are currently no OSB and plywood mills in the USA producing JAS certified products. Panel mills in the USA are designed to produce 4x8 panels, which are used for packaging rather than construction or concrete forms in Japan. However, there are at least 5 U.S. plywood companies that have expressed interest in getting JAS certification and/or have begun the certification process. It will take several months to complete certification. Still, some Japanese companies have begun inquiring about importing 4x8'. The industry is mostly concerned with the availability of product meeting the four star designation for low emissions (F\*\*\*\*), which is the lowest emission level allowed to be used in unlimited volumes indoors, rather than the JAS stamp.

## **POULTRY, MEAT, DAIRY AND LIVESTOCK**

There have been significant disruptions to the dairy industry due to plant damages, fuel shortages, and paper packing supply shortage, as well as distribution problems. Paper packaging plants are also damaged or still without power, and according to Ministry of Agriculture, paper packaging supply is less than a half of normal time.

Pork carcass prices have been pegged above ¥550/kg for “Jo (top)” grade due to the lower supply. Prices went above Yen600/kg on Monday at the Tokyo market due to the concerns over the supply shortage from the Tohoku area. However, prices cooled off to the current level, which is still high. U.S. Meat Export Federation expects prices to gradually decline, but stay above Yen500/kg, as the supply from Tohoku is unpredictable. The followings are the trend of national hogs slaughtered per day.

March 8----63,400

March 9----60,900

March 10—64,000

March 11---55,500---date of the earth quake

March 14—48,300

March 15—59,400

March 16—50,000

March 17—59,600

Pork from EU may be limited as European shipping companies are staying away from the ports in the Greater Tokyo area and further north. This decision was made by management of HAPAG LLOYD (Germany), CMA CGM (French), and HANBURG SUD (Germany). MAERSK and APL have granted the captain of each vessel the authority to decide whether to cancel or change ports. Though it is unclear how long this policy will be in place, exports of EU pork will be slow, especially from Denmark.

Beef prices have been relatively unaffected, mainly because the supply originates from the Kanto or west of Tokyo. The following data shows the national total cattle slaughtered per day with the number of Wagyu slaughtered recorded in the parenthesis.

March 8----4,940 (1,950)

March 9----4,560 (1,760)

March 10—3,880 (1,620)

March 11---3,800 (1,580)

March 14---3,570 (1,580)

March 15---3,820 (1,410)

March 16---3,590 (1,560)

March 17---3,640 (1,590)

Egg prices have jump up to 205 Yen/kg on 15 March and 225 Yen/kg because delivery infrastructure problems.

Elsewhere in the poultry and livestock industry:

- Amatake Broiler, Ohfunato, Iwate: The head office and some processing plants were wiped out by Tsunami.
- Takada Poultry: Breeder for layer: The farm was destroyed by Tsunami and 5 employees were killed and/or missing.
- Taiheiyo Breeding: Pig Breeder: 30,000 pigs in the Fukushima farm were left alone. All employees were evacuated because of Nuclear Power Station problems.
- Frieden Miyakoji Farm: 10,000 pigs were left alone in the farm because of evacuation by Nuclear Power Station problems.

## **TOXICITY**

Concerns about the potential toxicity of Japanese food and agricultural products are leading to government and consumer to take precautionary steps. In China rumors that radiation leaked into the sea from the Fukushima Daichi Nuclear Power Station have led to a run on salt, as consumers in China evidently believe that salt with iodine will help protect people from nuclear radiation.

On March 17 the Japanese Ministry of Health Labor and Welfare issued a press release and an advisory to municipal and prefectural authorities regarding the handling of food contaminated by radioactivity. Those two documents are as follows.

Press Release

March 17, 2011  
Policy Planning and Communication Division,  
Standards and Evaluation Division,  
Inspection and Safety Division,  
Department of Food Safety

Handling of food contaminated by radioactivity  
(Relating to the accident at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant)

- Due to the accident at the Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant which occurred on March 11, 2011, radioactivity has been detected in the surrounding environment. Therefore, from the perspective of the Food Sanitation Act, which aims to prevent sanitation hazards resulting from eating and drinking, and thereby protect citizen's good health, the "Indices relating to limits on food and drink ingestion" indicated by the Nuclear Safety Commission of Japan shall be adopted for the time being as provisional regulation values, and foods which exceed these levels shall be deemed to be regulated by Article 6, Item 2 of the Food Sanitation Act. Measures shall be taken to ensure that such foods are not supplied to the public to eat, and local governments have been notified as indicated on the separate sheet.

<Reference 1> Food Sanitation Act, Article 1

Article 1

The purpose of this Act is to prevent the sanitation hazards resulting from eating and drinking by enforcing the regulations and other measures necessary, from the viewpoint of public health, to ensure food safety and thereby to protect citizens' good health.

<Reference 2> Food Sanitation Act, Article 6, Item 2 (Extracts)

Article 6

The following food and additives shall not be sold (including cases of being delivered but not being sold to many and unspecified persons; the same shall apply hereinafter), or collected, produced, imported, processed, used, cooked, stored, or displayed for the purpose of marketing:

- (ii). Articles which contain or are covered with toxic or harmful substances or are suspected to contain or be covered with such substances; provided, however, that this shall not apply to cases where the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare specifies that such articles involve no risk to human health;

【Original: Japanese】

Notice No. 0317 Article 3 of the Department of Food Safety

March 17, 2011

To: All Prefectural Governors  
All Mayors in cities with Public Health Centers  
All Mayors of Special Wards

Director-General, Department of Food Safety, Pharmaceutical and Food Safety Bureau, Ministry of Health, Labour  
and Welfare

Handling of food contaminated by radioactivity

On March 11, 2011, the Prime Minister issued a declaration of a nuclear state of emergency relating for the accident at Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.

Therefore, from the perspective of the Food Sanitation Act, which aims to prevent sanitation hazards resulting from eating and drinking, and thereby protect citizen's good health, the "indices relating to limits on food and drink ingestion" indicated by the Nuclear Safety Commission of Japan shall be adopted for the time being as provisional regulation values, and foods which exceed these levels shall be deemed to be regulated by Article 6, Item 2 of the Food Sanitation Act. We would like you to take adequate measures in terms of sales and other areas, to ensure that such foods are not supplied to the public to eat.

Inspections shall be conducted by referring to the office memo "Manual for Measuring Radioactivity of Foods in Case of Emergency" dated May 9, 2002.

## Attachment

○Indices relating to limits on food and drink ingestion

Nuclide	Index values relating to ingestion limits in guidelines for coping with disasters at nuclear facilities etc. (Bq/kg)	
Radioactive iodine (Representative radio-nuclides among mixed radio-nuclides: $^{131}\text{I}$ )	Drinking water	300
	Milk, dairy products *	
	Vegetables (Except root vegetables and tubers)	2,000
Radioactive cesium	Drinking water	200
	Milk, dairy products	
	Vegetables	500
	Grains	
	Meat, eggs, fish, etc.	
Uranium	Infant foods	20
	Drinking water	
	Milk, dairy products	
	Vegetables	100
	Grains	
	Meat, eggs, fish, etc.	
Alpha-emitting nuclides of plutonium and transuranic elements (Total radioactive concentration of $^{238}\text{Pu}$ , $^{239}\text{Pu}$ , $^{240}\text{Pu}$ , $^{242}\text{Pu}$ , $^{241}\text{Am}$ , $^{242}\text{Cm}$ , $^{243}\text{Cm}$ , $^{244}\text{Cm}$ )	Infant foods	1
	Drinking water	
	Milk, dairy products	
	Vegetables	10
	Grains	
	Meat, eggs, fish etc.	

\*) Provide guidance so that materials exceeding 100 Bq/kg are not used in milk supplied for use in powdered baby formula or for direct drinking to baby.

## **HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTS**

Transport issues continue for fresh produce products to the Tohoku region (Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima) due to the shortage of gasoline and electric power outages in the Tokyo metro area and beyond. As a result, on-hand-stock of fresh produce products (including flowers) has been increasing in wholesale

markets in Tokyo. At this time, the majority of fresh produce are being supplied from the southern regions of Japan to the Tokyo area where transportation systems remain normal. Tokyo wholesalers are reportedly seeking alternative routes to transport products from Tokyo to the Tohoku region including a detour route from Tokyo through the Coast of the Japan Sea where the earthquake damage was relatively small. The Ibaraki prefecture is also experiencing the same transportation issues. Wholesale prices remain stable.

Ocean freight (Trans Pacific) boats normally traveling from West Coast of the United States to Japan usually stop and offload product at major ports such as Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, Kobe and then move on to South Korean ports. However, traders state that presently many boats are by-passing Tokyo and Yokohama ports even when port facilities and warehouses in these locations have been operating normally. Instead, products are being off-loaded in Osaka or Kobe, and sometimes in South Korea and later transported to Tokyo in smaller vessels. This may delay delivery of fresh produce to the Tokyo metro for about two weeks. Higher inventories and expectations of lower demand for fresh produce from restaurants and stores may be encouraging the delay in delivery. Hence, immediate increases in demand for imports are not expected at this time.

## **RETAIL AND DISTRIBUTION**

Local retail stores in Tokyo, away from the affected areas, are constantly busy restocking shelves while worried consumers continue to purchase items just in case another disaster occurs. The items that stores can't keep pace of are bottled water, rice, eggs, bread and bread products. Milk purchases are limited to one carton per customer. As already reported, deliveries are slow because truckers can't get sufficient fuel due to high levels of consumer gas purchases and the compromised fuel transportation infrastructure. With regard to gas supplies, prices are going up quickly throughout the nation. Regular gasoline has gone up from about 140 yen (\$1.75) per liter to 158 yen (\$1.97) per liter, and most stations are limiting customers to 20 liters or 3000 yen per visit.

In order to calm consumers GOJ is asking its citizens to avoid hoarding. Community communication sites are questioning the moral and selfish actions of those who hoard. Media are suggesting methods to cope with the shortages. Ideally people are listening and there will be some improvements in the short term, as these actions affect the ability of supplying the survivors at ground zero.

## **MEDIA**

- Nikkei reports that Asian countries are strengthening their procedures to inspect the radiation levels of goods and people arriving from Japan.
- In South Korea, foods imported from Japan began being subjected to stricter radiation scanning Monday. All pork and chicken is now scanned. Previously, only samples were tested. And

fishery products will henceforth be tested once a week instead of twice a year. In Thailand, foods imported from Japan are being scanned as a "preventative measure to protect consumers." Japanese restaurants there are reportedly holding off on new procurements of foods made in Japan. Also, the Indian government gave notification Tuesday that foods imported from Japan would be subject to sample inspections.

- Nihon Nogyo (aka Japan Agricultural News) reports remarks by the deputy spokesman at the White House as saying, "The U.S. authority is conducting tests on imported foods on a daily basis. They are also conducting tests on foods imported from Japan adequately." However, he did not make it clear that whether the U.S. will conduct a test for Japanese foods especially for radiation.
- Asahi and Nihon Nogyo reported on March 17, that MHLW sent a notification to prefectural governments to conduct a test on foods for radiation in order to prevent foods with over standard levels of radiation would be marketed. In the notification, MHLW advises that prefectural governments refer to the "indices relating to limits on food and drink ingestion" issued by the Nuclear Safety Commission of Japan (see the indices attached).
- Asahi reports that a supermarket chain in Tokyo started to avoid purchasing farm products grown in Fukushima.

## **DONATIONS**

According to a March 17 article in VOA news.com, some U.S. non-profit groups say donations are slow in coming after a week has passed since the deadly earthquake and tsunami in Japan. International aid efforts are underway, but donations from Americans lag compared to earthquake relief for Haiti last year. After disaster struck Japan, Americans donated some \$64 million in five days, compared to \$210 million for Haiti, according to The Chronicle of Philanthropy.

Nonetheless, Japanese private firms are registering impressive in-kind and cash donations. Most mid-size food companies have donated prepared food products via MAFF and directly. The food requested from affected area as of March 15 was 2.73 million meals, though only 1.23 million had been supplied at that point. According to some media sources, total donations from the food industry were 1.7 billion JPY on March 15. Examples of private sector donations include:

- Itochu: President decided to donate 400 million JYEN (about \$5 million calculating with \$1=82 JYEN) for the damage. Affiliated companies in China also donate 100 million JYEN.
- Marubeni: 400 million JYEN.
- Mitsubishi : 400 million JYEN.
- Mitsui Bussan: 400 million JYEN.
- Sumitomo Shoji: 400 million JYEN.
- Sojitz: it donates 100 million JYEN and will do charity donation by board members. Tohoku

branch office was untouched by the earthquake.

- Toyota Tsucho: 100 million JYEN.
- Kanematsu: 30 million JYEN.
- Agricultural Coop Federation (counterpart of Zen-Noh in Japan) in Taiwan started collecting contribution through 302 local Coops, with a target amount of 20 million Taiwan Yuan, to be donated to JA Zen-Noh Group. The donation is a return to the donation from JA Group after the September 1999 earthquake, according to Mr. Chuan (sp?), Executive Director of the Coop.
- Nippon Ham announced the donation of \$1.2 mill to the Tohoku, Ito Ham declared the same with additional donation of 156,000 packs of meat ball and Prima put \$550,000 for donation. Marudai plans to donate 100,000 pieces of fish sausage to the area.
- Zen-Noh donated 13,000 breads, 48,000 bottles of green tea and quite few tissue paper.

The following is a list of organizations that are coordinating relief efforts for the stricken area. Please note that the U.S. Embassy is not a point of contact for relief efforts. U.S. Military aid is being coordinated directly by the U.S. military at the request of the Japanese Self Defense Forces.

FAS Tokyo does not vouch for or endorse any organization on this list.

- <http://www.cidi.org/commodity-available-registration?view=commodityavailable> - This site, run by USAID, allows companies to register and list offers of in-kind donations, which then will be matched to stated requests from the Government of Japan, if any.
- [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org) - This link lists a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that respond to crises globally and have operations on the ground in Japan.
- [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) - This is the main USAID website.
- The Red Cross - <http://www.jrc.or.jp/english/index.html> - This is the Japanese (English Language ) web site. But you may want to contact the American Red Cross for Options - <http://www.redcross.org/>
- Airlines – United Airlines allows you to donate miles to the cause or donate miles to help aid workers travel to Japan - <http://www.ua.com>, American Airlines has a similar program - <http://www.aa.com/homePage.do>
- If you are a Member of the Chamber of Commerce – email to [helpjapan@accj.or.jp](mailto:helpjapan@accj.or.jp) or e-mail to the U.S. site - [BCLChelpdesk@uschamber.com](mailto:BCLChelpdesk@uschamber.com)
- The Japan America Society – There are many Japan America Societies throughout the U.S. Here is a link for the Colorado Chapter - <http://www.jascolorado.org/index.php> - Please look up links for your local chapter.
- GLOBALGIVING: Established a fund to disburse donations to organizations providing relief and emergency services to victims of the earthquake and tsunami. [www.globalgiving.org](http://www.globalgiving.org)
- SAVE THE CHILDREN: Mobilizing to provide immediate humanitarian relief in the shape of emergency health care and provision of non-food items and shelter. [www.savethechildren.org](http://www.savethechildren.org)

- SALVATION ARMY: The Salvation Army has been in Japan since 1895 and is currently providing emergency assistance to those in need. [www.salvationarmyusa.org](http://www.salvationarmyusa.org)
- AMERICARES: Emergency team is on full alert, mobilizing resources and dispatching an emergency response manager to the region. [www.americares.org](http://www.americares.org)
- CONVOY OF HOPE: Disaster Response team established connection with in-country partners who have been impacted by the damage and are identifying the needs and areas where Convoy of Hope may be of the greatest assistance. [www.convoyofhope.org](http://www.convoyofhope.org)
- INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CORPS: Putting together relief teams, as well as supplies, and are in contact with partners in Japan and other affected countries to assess needs and coordinate our activities. [www.internationalmedicalcorps.org](http://www.internationalmedicalcorps.org)
- SHELTER BOX: The first team is mobilizing to head to Japan and begin the response effort. [www.shelterbox.org](http://www.shelterbox.org)